

is designed for potential use as a sole implant, and thus the legs **58** and **60** are certainly configured to extend into bifurcated sections of the vasculature, as explained at Column 11, line 52, through Column 12, line 5.” It is respectfully submitted, however, that Goicoechea et al. does not teach that the embodiment of Figure 5 includes legs **58** and **60** which are configured to extend into bifurcated sections of the vasculature. In fact, the Goicoechea et al. patent teaches placing a bifurcated prosthesis in “juxtaposition” with an arterial bifurcation and “If a prosthesis is required in one or both of the branched arteries, a separate prosthesis...can be connected to the bifurcated prosthesis.” It is respectfully submitted that the term “juxtaposition” means “next to” and not within and thus, the Goicoechea et al. patent does not teach a bifurcated graft that has a leg portion that is in a branch vessel in combination with an extender which mates with that leg portion. This interpretation of “juxtaposition” is consistent with its use in the Goicoechea et al. patent particularly where apices are described as being juxtaposed and shown as being next to each other but not overlapping. This interpretation is also consistent with the description associated with the device shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B where distal part 16 (the longer leg of a bifurcated device) is described as extending into one of the iliac arteries and where the specification of the Goicoechea et al. patent states that where it is required that a prosthesis be implanted in the other iliac artery, a second prosthesis can be used. Significantly, the disclosed device is described as permitting flow to both iliac arteries even though it is clear that the second leg of the bifurcated stent does not extend within the iliac artery.

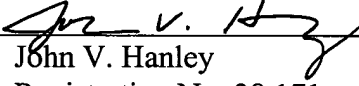
Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the Goicoechea et al. patent does not recognize the difficulty with preoperatively measuring anatomy and a need for accommodating widely

varying arterial sizes. Consequently, the Goicoechea patent does not contemplate, as is recited in each of the pending claims, an extender that mates with a leg of a graft that already reaches and extends within a branch artery but rather, merely contemplates connecting a bifurcated graft leg that is "free floating" in a main vessel to a branch vessel. As such, it is believed that pending claims 67-81 define patentable subject matter.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that claim 67-81 be allowed and the present application passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

FULWIDER PATTON LEE & UTECHT, LLP

By: 
John V. Hanley
Registration No. 38,171

JVH:kst
Howard Hughes center
6060 Center Drive
Los Angeles, California 90045
Tel.: (310) 824-5555
Fax: (310) 824-9696
253773.1